

E.R.M.E

SECTION 5: ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Environmental Resource Management Element (ERME) of the *Whittier General Plan* identifies environmental resources within the City and establishes a plan for their conservation, management, or preservation. The ERME promotes the management of natural resources to prevent the neglect, destruction, or disturbance of sensitive resources. The Element establishes a long-range program for the preservation of open space areas in the City and for the provision of recreation areas and facilities to serve the needs of residents. The Element includes an inventory of both public and private open space and a plan for continued protection of these areas and enhancement of opportunities for recreation.

The ERME combines the mandated Conservation and Open Space Elements and complies with regulations in *Section 65302(d) and (e) of the California Government Code* and the *State Mining and Reclamation Act*. The Element addresses conservation issues to increase awareness of the presence and condition of natural and cultural resources and to promote the advantages of conservation and management through its goals and policies. Conservation includes the regulation of resource utilization, preservation techniques, and activities which affect or preclude the use of resources. The City's conservation plan consists of independent programs for the managed use of oil and mineral resources, the conservation of groundwater, preservation of hillsides, protection of scenic corridors, and the protection of native plant and animal life. The plan will help maintain ecological balance and improve the quality of life in Whittier.

Open space refers to unimproved land or water devoted to the preservation of natural resources for outdoor recreation or for public health and safety concerns. This includes wildlife habitats, rivers, groundwater recharge areas, and areas with mineral deposits. Trails, parks, outdoor recreation areas, utility easements, scenic highway corridors, and areas requiring the regulation of hazardous conditions such as earthquake fault zones, unstable soils, flood plains, and watersheds are also considered open space.

The ERME also fulfills the requirements of *Section 65560 to 65570 of the California Government Code* regarding the preparation of an open space element for the City. Open space and recreation are considered together because of the interdependence between the two issues. Areas preserved as open space may also serve as a valuable resource for outdoor recreation.

Major conservation and open space issues affecting the City of Whittier, which are considered in this Element, are summarized below. More detailed information on these topics can be found in the Environmental Resource Management Element Background Report.

- The groundwater resources of the planning area are part of a complex system of aquifers and soil formations in the Los Angeles Basin. The City derives much of its water from wells near the Whittier Narrows area. Oil resources continue to be tapped in the Puente Hills area and a number of groundwater basins in the region have experienced contamination in recent years.

Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

- Native vegetation has been replaced by non-native species in the urbanized areas of the City. Native plant and animal species are limited to the Puente Hills and include grassland, inland sage scrub, mixed chaparral, and riparian woodland. These plant communities serve as habitats for amphibians, reptiles, birds, rodents and mammals. Sensitive (rare, threatened or endangered) animals are found near the northwest corner of the City and in the Whittier Narrows area.
- Open space in the planning area includes the Puente Hills, City parks, the Friendly Hills golf course, the Savage Canyon Landfill and scattered vacant lots. The Puente Hills provide a variety of opportunities for the conservation of open space and natural resources. The City, through this General Plan, has expressed strong interest in becoming involved in the planning and preservation of the hillside areas. There are 24 City parks with a total area of approximately 338 acres. These parks provide a variety of opportunities for recreational and leisure activities. Facilities at these parks include recreation buildings, picnic grounds, pools, game fields, game courts, playground equipment, and hiking trails. Local schools also have open fields that are available for public use.
- There are a number of equestrian trails in the area, including the San Gabriel River Trail along the river banks and the Skyline Trail along the Puente Hills on the north. Bikeways are provided on street rights-of-way throughout the City. The expansion of the existing system of equestrian and bicycle trails will allow greater use of these facilities.
- Sections of the City on the northwest, southeast, and east are not within easy access to a neighborhood park. Park maintenance, improvements, and acquisition continue to be City concerns. Opportunities for new parks are presented by vacant lots, the Puente Hills, railroad rights-of-way which are abandoned or will be abandoned, and the landfill.
- Scenic resources in Whittier are provided by the Puente Hills and scenic roadway corridors such as Colima Road, Turnbull Canyon Road, Beverly Boulevard, and Skyline Drive. Other environmental resource issues include recycling, energy conservation, landscaped areas, and recreation programs.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ELEMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

The goals and policies below address the different conservation and open space concerns in Whittier, as identified in the ERME Background Report. These issues include resource conservation, energy conservation, open space, and its acquisition, recreation, scenic corridors, hillside areas, and recycling. The ERME goals and policies addressing these issues will provide a firm direction, for the preservation, use, protection, management, and improvement of existing resources in the City.

Issue: Resource Conservation

The City's natural environment contains many amenities that deserve protection for future generations. Resource conservation will protect and preserve existing resources in the City for future availability and use. The goals and policies below reflect Whittier's concern for natural resources in the planning area.

- Goal 1 Preserve or conserve natural and cultural resources that have scientific, educational, economic, aesthetic, social, and cultural value.
- Policy 1.1 Cooperate with state, federal and regional agencies to monitor water quality and to provide an adequate supply of high quality water for local and regional needs.
- Policy 1.2 Encourage practices that stress soil conservation as a means to retain native vegetation, maximize water infiltration, provide slope stabilization, allow scenic enjoyment, and reduce flood hazards.
- Policy 1.3 Preserve adequate open space areas for major habitat types, so as to maintain ecosystems in a natural balance for recreation, scientific, economic, educational, and scenic purposes.
- Policy 1.4 Work with appropriate agencies to rehabilitate the oil fields or encourage the rehabilitation of these lands within the planning area for open space, recreation, or other beneficial resource conservation uses after site reclamation.
- Policy 1.5 Encourage property owners to preserve areas with native vegetation, wildlife habitat, and visual beauty.

Issue: Energy Conservation

Urban development creates a demand for energy in the construction, maintenance, and operation of various structures and equipment. Energy is also consumed by human activities and vehicle use. Dwindling regional resources and increased demand have led to cost increases and the threat of resource depletion. Energy conservation will help reduce costs and assure resource availability in the future.

- Goal 2 The City of Whittier recognizes that current sources of energy are limited and should not be wasted. Whenever possible, especially in new development, special energy conservation measures should be included in the design of the project.

Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

- Policy 2.1 Encourage energy conservation measures in existing and new developments, whether public or private, within the Whittier planning area.
- Policy 2.2 Encourage developments to take advantage of energy conservation programs offered by utility companies and other agencies.

Issue: Open Space

Open space areas refer to any parcel or area of land or water that is essentially unimproved and is devoted to an open space use for the purposes of (1) the preservation of natural resources, (2) the managed production of resources, (3) outdoor recreation, or (4) public health and safety. The preservation of existing open space will promote conservation of these resources and help maintain the quality of the environment. The policies below emphasize the City's concern for the availability of open space areas in the community.

- Goal 3 Secure a safe, healthful, and wholesome environment through careful planning and preservation of open space resources.
 - Policy 3.1 Protect existing wildlife habitats through the preservation of open space.
 - Policy 3.2 Future hillside development will be permitted or approved only if it involves minimal adverse impacts on the environment and natural topography.
 - Policy 3.3 Participate with the County of Los Angeles, the Southern California Association of Governments, and other responsible agencies on all open space planning matters to the extent necessary to implement the City's General Plan policies regarding open space, housing production goals, and wildlife preservation within its sphere of influence.
 - Policy 3.4 Continue to enforce mitigation measures for projects which have the potential for significant and irreversible adverse environmental effects.
 - Policy 3.5 Work with other agencies and service organizations to identify potential strategies and funding sources for the acquisition of open space within the Puente Hills and other areas of the City and encourage flexibility in the planning of any development in the Puente Hills, to allow innovative planning designs that preserve open space and reduce potential environmental impacts.

Issue: Acquisition of Open Space

Open space areas in private ownership cannot be designated as open space in a General Plan. Development pressure will likely lead to urban development on vacant lands in the City and areas

Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

that are developed are not expected to revert back to open space. Open space areas, designated as such in a General Plan, need to be acquired by the City or dedicated by private property owners as a condition of approval before development takes place.

Goal 4 Preservation of open space land for resource retention and recreational use will be a priority in future planning.

Policy 4.1 The City should encourage the dedication of open space land for public use whenever possible.

Policy 4.2 Retain existing open space in public ownership, wherever possible, including surplus land within the City limits offered for sale by other public agencies.

Policy 4.3 Encourage the retention of privately-owned outdoor recreation uses and consider the public acquisition of such land when the open space uses located, thereon, may be discontinued by the owners.

Policy 4.4 Actively pursue acquisition of open space areas not only to provide areas for traditional recreation activities, but also to preserve ecological features which are valuable for their scientific, educational, scenic, and cultural values.

Policy 4.5 Pursue the use of open space land used for public and semipublic rights-of-way for possible multiple use which would complement the continuity of other designated open space areas, with the consent of the owners and other appropriate agencies.

Policy 4.6 Make every effort to locate possible sources of funds for the acquisition of open space, including, but not limited to, Federal funds, State funds, County funds, Proposition A (Safe Neighborhoods & Parks Act of 1992), and funds from private sources.

Policy 4.7 Work toward the acquisition and dedication of open space land in the unincorporated county areas for purposes of expanding the Hellman Wilderness Park.

Issue: Recreation

Recreation improves individual well-being and is a source of enjoyment, diversion, and entertainment. Recreation opportunities in the City of Whittier are provided by public parks, private recreational facilities, open space areas, and bicycle and equestrian trails. These facilities make the City a more attractive residential location and support the recreational interests of residents.

Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

- Goal 5** Provide a sufficient range of recreation opportunities to meet the needs of residents of all ages and interests in the community.
- Policy 5.1 Identify the needs and possible locations for special use facilities such as trails, swimming pools, multi-use sports fields, walking trails, bicycle and equestrian trails in the City.
 - Policy 5.2 Encourage cooperation between all user groups and agencies involved with parks and recreation, with special emphasis on the coordination of parks and school programs and facilities.
 - Policy 5.3 Integrate recreation planning efforts to consider conservation, open space, and scenic highway areas and programs designed to conserve these resources.
 - Policy 5.4 Identify all land under public and private ownership used for recreation within the Whittier planning area in order to determine the availability of such lands for park and recreation purposes.
 - Policy 5.5 Develop a system of continuous cross town bicycle, equestrian, and hiking trails which will encourage the use and enjoyment of public open space in the City and the surrounding area.
 - Policy 5.6 Cooperate with the County of Los Angeles in the establishment and acquisition of open space and park land, including but not limited to, greenbelts, trails, and wilderness-type reservations.
 - Policy 5.7 Update the survey of parks and recreational facilities in the City to assess the current effectiveness of parks and recreation programs, as well as the needs and interests of Whittier residents, and update the City's Master Plan for Parks and Recreational Facilities.
 - Policy 5.8 Translate recreational needs into space requirements in order to determine optimum standards for park development.
 - Policy 5.9 Promote access to the physically challenged within existing and future parks.
 - Policy 5.10 Coordinate the use of parkland with other community concerns, such as air quality, traffic circulation, and safety.
 - Policy 5.11 Encourage the use of parks by promoting a wide range of uses and activities for equestrians, hikers, children, joggers, cyclists, etc.

Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

- Policy 5.12 Encourage joint use/maintenance agreements with school districts to provide athletic fields and gymnasiums for the use of all persons in the community.
- Policy 5.13 Encourage the landscaping of railroad rights-of-way and major arterials to serve as buffers from adjacent uses.
- Policy 5.14 Wherever feasible, provide recreational improvements in conjunction with existing facilities that have other primary purposes, such as flood control or abandoned railroad rights-of-way.
- Policy 5.15 Encourage the preservation of privately-owned residential open space (e.g. common areas within residential projects).
- Policy 5.16 Support the implementation of the Whittier Hills Park Plan.

Issue: Scenic Roadways and Corridors

Whittier has many scenic amenities which include the Puente Hills, tree-lined streets, and attractive historic neighborhoods. These amenities enhance the environment and create a sense of identity for the City. By recognizing the factors that contribute to the area's aesthetic qualities, the City can better preserve and enhance the beauty of its physical environment.

- Goal 6 Maintain amenities along major roadways which provide beauty, identity, and form to the community and to neighborhoods within the community.
 - Policy 6.1 Upgrade entryways and areas along major thoroughfares through the City.
 - Policy 6.2 Protect scenic corridors that have aesthetic, recreational, cultural, or historic values.
 - Policy 6.3 Identify the portions of the street system which, together with the adjacent scenic corridors, require special scenic treatments.
 - Policy 6.4 Work closely with the County of Los Angeles or appropriate State agencies on the preparation of plans for scenic corridors identified by the ERME and adopted by either the City or County.

Issue: Hillside Areas

The Puente Hills are an important ecological and scenic resource for the City and represent the only remaining large undeveloped area. Without adequate controls on future hillside developments, the Puente Hills and its resources could be lost, destroyed, or neglected.

Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

Goal 7 Protect and preserve the hillside areas.

- Policy 7.1 Work with land owners and government agencies in promoting land use plans that are sensitive to the environment and give maximum consideration to the preservation of natural habitats.
- Policy 7.2 Work with land owners and government agencies in identifying areas that should be preserved as open space for recreation, resource management, or public safety.
- Policy 7.3 Continue to work with Los Angeles County and other government agencies in the preparation and review of development plans in the Puente Hills and in identifying ways to preserve the environment.
- Policy 7.4 Promote the preservation of the Puente Hills within the planning area between Workman Mill Road and the La Habra Heights boundary as permanent open space, to the greatest extent possible, for the enjoyment of not only the citizens of Whittier, but for the surrounding communities and Southern California as a whole.
- Policy 7.5 Continue to enforce the City's hillside development standards.

Issue: Source Reduction and Recycling

The lack of available land for landfills and the environmental consequences of past waste disposal activities have led to the increasing need for recycling and reuse of materials, products, and solid waste. While the City of Whittier has its own municipal landfill, decreases in its capacity and area for expansion call for more aggressive recycling practices. Reductions in the amount of solid waste will lead to the preservation of land for urban or open space use and the protection of soil, groundwater, and air resources.

Goal 8 Promote recycling, source reduction, and waste management practices to reduce the volume of solid waste.

- Policy 8.1 Support and complement existing recycling programs by public and private agencies (Lion's Club, Boy Scouts, area grocers, etc.) and encourage waste stream reduction and recycling of solid waste to extend the life of the Savage Canyon Landfill.
- Policy 8.2 The City will implement the Source Reduction and Recycling Element pursuant to AB 939.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Environmental resource management is an important program. In order to achieve the goals and policies of this Element, specific implementation measures have been identified. These measures include existing and new programs that would be undertaken by City staff. Table 5-1 identifies the implementation measures for each ERME goal and policy. A description of each measure, along with the responsible agency, time frame for implementation, and funding source is provided in Section 10.

TABLE 5-1 ERME IMPLEMENTATION		
Goal	Policy	Implementation Measure
1. Preservation of valuable natural & cultural resources.	1.1 Cooperate with other agencies in preserving water resources.	Inter-agency Coordination Water Quality Monitoring Wells Water Conservation Program
	1.2 Encourage soil conservation.	Tree Preservation Program Sidewalk & Parkway Development & Maintenance Hillside Standards
	1.3 Preserve open space areas for wildlife & plant habitats.	Puente Hills Cooperative Planning Program
	1.4 Work with other agencies in rehabilitation of oil fields.	Oil Field Rehabilitation & Site Reclamation Puente Hills Cooperative Planning Program Open Space Acquisition Environmental Review
	1.5 Encourage preservation of areas with native vegetation wildlife habitats and visual beauty.	Environmental Review Hillside Standards Tree Preservation Program
2. Promotion of Energy Conservation.	2.1 Encourage energy conservation measures.	Energy Conservation
	2.2 Encourage the use of energy conservation programs offered by utility companies.	Energy Conservation



Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

TABLE 5-1 ERME IMPLEMENTATION (continued)		
Goal	Policy	Implementation Measure
3. Preservation of Open Space Resources	3.1 Protect unique examples of wildlife habitat.	Environmental Review Hillside Standards Park Needs Study Update
	3.2 Minimize development impacts on hills & natural vegetation.	Environmental Review Hillside Standards Open Space Acquisition
	3.3 Participate with other agencies in open space planning within the City's sphere of influence.	Puente Hills Cooperative Planning Program
	3.4 Enforce mitigation measures for development.	Environmental Review Inter-agency Coordination Environmental Regulations Mitigation Monitoring
	3.5 Identify potential strategies and funding sources for open space acquisition.	Open Space Acquisition Park Needs Study Update
4. Preservation of Open Spaces.	4.1 Encourage dedication of open space land.	Park Needs Study Update
	4.2 Retain existing open space in public ownership.	Park Needs Study Update
	4.3 Preserve private open space areas and consider public acquisition.	Deed Restriction Private Recreation Facilities

Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

TABLE 5-1 ERME IMPLEMENTATION (continued)		
Goal	Policy	Implementation Measure
Preservation of Open Spaces (continued)	4.4 Pursue acquisition of open space areas.	Open Space Acquisition Puente Hills Cooperative Planning Program
	4.5 Pursue the use of open space for multi-use trails.	Conversion of Railroad Rights-of-Way Park Needs Study Update
	4.6 Explore funding sources for acquisition of open space.	Open Space Acquisition Park Needs Study Update
	4.7 Pursue future expansion of Hellman Wilderness Park.	Park Needs Study Update Wilderness Park Expansion
5. Provision of Recreation Opportunities	5.1 Identify possible locations for special recreational facilities.	Park Fees Parks Needs Study Update Private Recreation Facilities
	5.2 Encourage cooperation in park planning.	Recreational Facilities Planning Park Maintenance & Recreation Programs
	5.3 Integrate recreation planning with conservation, open space, & scenic highway programs.	Park Needs Study Update
	5.4 Identify land that may be suitable for future park development.	Open Space Acquisition Park Needs Study Update Wilderness Park Expansion
	5.5 Develop a system for bicycle, equestrian and hiking trails.	Park Needs Study Update Bikeway and Equestrian Trails Open Space Acquisition National Historic Trail
	5.6 Cooperate with Los Angeles County in open space & park planning.	Bikeways and Equestrian Trails Puente Hills Cooperative Planning Program

Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

TABLE 5-1 ERME IMPLEMENTATION (continued)		
Goal	Policy	Implementation Measure
Provision of Recreation Opportunities (continued)	5.7 Update Parks Needs Study to evaluate effective use of current parks and recreation programs.	Park Needs Study Update
	5.8 Translate recreational needs into park space requirements.	Park Needs Study Update
	5.9 Promote handicap access at City parks.	Handicap Access Requirements
	5.10 Coordinate use of parkland of other community concerns.	Park Needs Study Update
	5.11 Encourage full use of parks & recreational facilities.	Park Needs Study Update Park Maintenance & Recreation Program
	5.12 Encourage joint use/maintenance agreements with school districts.	Recreational Facilities Planning
	5.13 Encourage landscaping of railroad rights-of-way & major arterials.	Landscaping and Land Use Buffers
	5.14 Provide recreation facilities in conjunction with existing facilities.	Conversion of Railroad Rights-of-way
	5.15 Preserve privately-owned residential open space land.	Deed Restriction
	5.16 Whittier Hills Park Plan.	Parks Needs Study Update Wilderness Park Expansion

Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

TABLE 5-1 ERME IMPLEMENTATION (continued)		
Goal	Policy	Implementation Measure
6. Maintenance of some roadways & corridors.	6.1 Upgrade entryways & areas along major thoroughfares.	Entryway Signage Sign Ordinance Review Sidewalk & Parkway Development & Maintenance Street Maintenance Tree Preservation Program
	6.2 Protect scenic corridors.	Scenic Corridor Preservation Tree Preservation Program
	6.3 Identify portions of street system which would benefit from scenic treatments.	Scenic Corridor Preservation
	6.4 Cooperating with county and state agencies for scenic corridor plans.	Scenic Corridor Preservation National Historic Trail
7. Work with property owners & governmental agencies in planning of Puente Hills.	7.1 Promote land use plans that are sensitive to environment & infrastructure capacity.	Puente Hills Cooperative Planning Program
	7.2 Promote land use plans that consider typography, compatibility with existing development and viewsheds.	Puente Hills Cooperative Planning Program Hillside Standards
	7.3 Work with other agencies in the review of development in the Puente Hills.	Puente Hills Cooperative Planning Program
	7.4 Promote the preservation of the Puente Hills within the planning area.	Puente Hills Cooperative Planning Program
	7.5 Continue to enforce hillside development ordinance.	Hillside Standards

Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

TABLE 5-1 ERME IMPLEMENTATION (continued)		
Goal	Policy	Implementation Measure
8. Promotion of source reduction, recycling, & waste management.	8.1 Support existing recycling programs.	Source Reduction & Recycling Element
	8.2 Implement source reduction & waste recycling element.	Source Reduction & Recycling Element

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The earth's resources are limited and many of our resources are non-renewable. Conservation and managed use allow maximum utilization and ensure continued availability of these resources for future generations. Water, soil, and mineral resources are finite resources. Their continued availability will only be possible with conservation. Plant and animal communities need to be protected to maintain ecological balance. Open space areas, once developed, cannot be returned to their natural condition. Thus, they have to be preserved. Parks and recreational facilities provide opportunities for leisure, enjoyment, and relaxation. The scenic qualities of the community are often provided by natural landforms and open spaces. Environmental resource management is concerned with the protection of the area's resources from neglect, destruction, or depletion.

The Whittier Environmental Resource Management Plan calls for maximum protection of the natural environment and available resources. The Plan contains three major components: the Conservation Plan, the Open Space and Recreation Plan, and the Scenic Corridor Plan, corresponding to the major issues addressed by the Element. The Conservation Plan deals with water resources, mineral resources, plant and animal communities, and the natural topography. The Plan provides a citywide approach to the utilization, conservation, and management of these resources. It includes a program for preservation of significant resources and standards for development in areas with identified resources. The Recreation Plan address parks and recreation facilities, bikeways and equestrian trails, and open spaces. Guidelines for overall development of recreation opportunities in the City and standards for park development are outlined in the Plan. The Scenic Corridor Plan provides for the identification and improvement of Whittier's scenic corridors.

CONSERVATION PLAN

The Background Report for the ERME has identified the presence of natural resources in the planning area. The location of these resources represent the remaining areas where development has not disturbed or obstructed access to the resources. For purposes of future planning, a sensitivity ranking has been established according to the following:

- **Low Sensitivity** - In Whittier, areas with no significant resources or where past development has destroyed or significantly altered the presence or availability of resources are considered to have *low sensitivity*. These include the urbanized areas of the City consisting of almost 80 percent of the total land area.
- **Moderate Sensitivity** - Areas with low density developments where natural resources may still be present or may be utilized and areas adjacent to identified ecological resources are considered to have *moderate sensitivity*. Increases in human activities or development intensity in these areas can disturb or destroy existing natural resources or prevent future access and use of these resources. Areas with moderate sensitivity include those areas near the hillsides and other undeveloped land serving as parks, flood control channels, etc.
- **High Sensitivity** - Areas with ecologically sensitive resources are those areas where studies or activities have uncovered a significant or important natural resource areas currently used for the extraction of resources, or undisturbed areas that have a very high potential for the presence of natural resources. These areas have *high sensitivity* and are the priority targets for conservation and preservation. They include the canyons which serve as water recharge areas; the hillside with sensitive plant and animal habitats, oil resource areas where drilling is ongoing; and other areas where resources will be uncovered in the future.

The City of Whittier is working towards the conservation of natural resources and the preservation of areas with significant resources. Conservation efforts will be made according to the sensitivity of identified resources. Conservation efforts will be focused on areas with high sensitivity and where City programs will have the greatest impact on the conservation of natural resources. The programs include aggressive measures to promote the preservation, conservation, or managed use of natural resources.

The Conservation Plan calls for the protection of water resources. The area's water resources are part of the complex groundwater system throughout the Los Angeles Basin. The resources in the City of Whittier are confined to the presence of canyons which serve as recharge areas. While the City of Whittier derives its water supply from wells in the Whittier Narrows area, it is responsible for ensuring that groundwater resources are not overdrafted or depleted. The canyons in the Puente Hills provide natural recharge areas which need to be preserved to allow the natural recharge of local aquifers and the continued availability of water.

Also, the City of Whittier is concerned with protecting the groundwater resources from contamination and other forms of destruction which will prevent their availability for domestic uses. This applies to the Savage Canyon Landfill, industrial areas, and activities involving hazardous materials. Programs to protect groundwater contamination have to be in place. Water conservation programs should also be developed to reduce the amount of groundwater pumping at the Whittier Narrows area.

Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

The Savage Canyon Landfill serves the waste disposal needs of the City. Waste reduction programs will lengthen the life of the landfill and will allow the landfill to serve future residents of the City.

The Conservation Plan also includes regulations on the drilling of oil resources. The City of Whittier owns the mineral rights on City-owned property and Chevron Company controls the majority of oil fields in the surrounding county area. There will be controls on drilling operations, disposal of oil on the ground, and reclamation of the site after oil drilling operations cease. The standards may include:

- Drilling activities to be at least 300 feet from residential areas;
- Safety measures for operations and employees;
- Operations fenced from public view with landscaping, walls or berm;
- Approval of a conditional use permit for day-to-day operation, closure, or abandonment of oil wells;
- Clean-up of oil products and by-products on the drilling sites; and
- Development of reclamation plans for review and approval by the City and responsible agencies.

The Puente Hills contain the oil resources in the area. At the same time, they are the only remaining areas with native vegetation and wildlife habitats. The balance between oil drilling activities and the protection of plant and animal communities in the hillsides must be established. The City will actively support ecologically sound practices related to oil well closure and abandonment in the Puente Hills.

The protection of plant and animal communities in the Puente Hills means the preservation of these areas as open space. Open space refers to areas left vacant and undeveloped to allow biological resources to exist and thrive. With much of the Puente Hills owned by private individuals and groups, and located outside the City limits, the City of Whittier has limited control of development in the area. In order to preserve the hills, the City of Whittier will explore funding sources and other ways to acquire the most ecologically sensitive areas of the Puente Hills.

Development plans are currently being proposed for some areas of the Puente Hills. In recognition of property rights and County authority over the area, the City of Whittier wants to be actively involved in the planning and conservation of the hills. The City will actively pursue the preservation of the open space resources in the area. This will lead to the protection of ecological resources in the habitats and hills.

Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

Plant and animal communities may be re-established by encouraging residents to use native plant materials and drought tolerant vegetation. This will conserve water and increase plant and animal habitats in the City. The landscaping of exposed slopes and graded areas will also protect the natural topography of the hillsides.

Development Standards

Conservation does not necessarily mean the prevention of development and keeping the areas vacant and underutilized. There are several ways to protect natural resources. By providing appropriate development standards for areas with high sensitivity, the City of Whittier can protect natural resources while still allowing development to take place. Urban developments in highly sensitive areas must be reviewed for their impact on the presence and availability of natural resources. Exhibit 5-1 shows designated conservation areas in the planning area that correspond to those areas identified as having a high sensitivity. The following standards should apply to development within areas with high sensitivity for ecological resources:

- Field surveys and investigations must be made to identify potential natural resources prior to development approval.
- Brush control programs for fire prevention should be sensitive to natural vegetation and animal habitats.
- Trustee agencies and local environmental groups should be consulted to insure the environmental review is thorough.
- Development should be sensitive to significant natural resources located onsite or in nearby areas.
- Limit off-road vehicle use in the hillsides which may destroy existing resources.
- Prevent development in areas with geologic and seismic hazards where risk cannot be eliminated by construction methods.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN

Recreational opportunities in the City of Whittier are provided by City parks, private recreation facilities, open space areas for hiking or biking, bicycle and equestrian trails, and scenic corridors. The City's Recreation Plan includes the development of recreation facilities, trails, and scenic corridors, and the preservation of open space areas and amenities that create the scenic qualities in the planning area.

Open space is preserved for a variety of reasons. It provides watershed areas, prevents erosion, provides recreational opportunities, preserves wildlife habitats, controls pollution, and provides

Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

visual and aesthetic amenities. The majority of the natural environment has been replaced by urban development. In Whittier, very little land remains undeveloped. Vacant lots within urbanized areas cannot serve open space purposes because they are surrounded by structures and are often small scattered parcels that will be developed in the future.

The Puente Hills provide the major open space resource in the City. The hills provide watershed, erosion control, recreation, wildlife habitats, pollution abatement, and visual values. Future development within the Puente Hills will need to be sensitive to the seismic risk that is present from the Whittier fault as well as other potential hazards (wildfire, landslides, liquefaction, etc.). The hills also provide the City with its scenic qualities.

The City of Whittier is largely developed and new park areas and open space will only be available with dedication from private ownership or from direct purchase of suitable land. The City of Whittier establishes the following guidelines for the acquisition of open space:

The highest priority for acquisition should be given to those open space and natural resource sites to which at least one of the following applies:

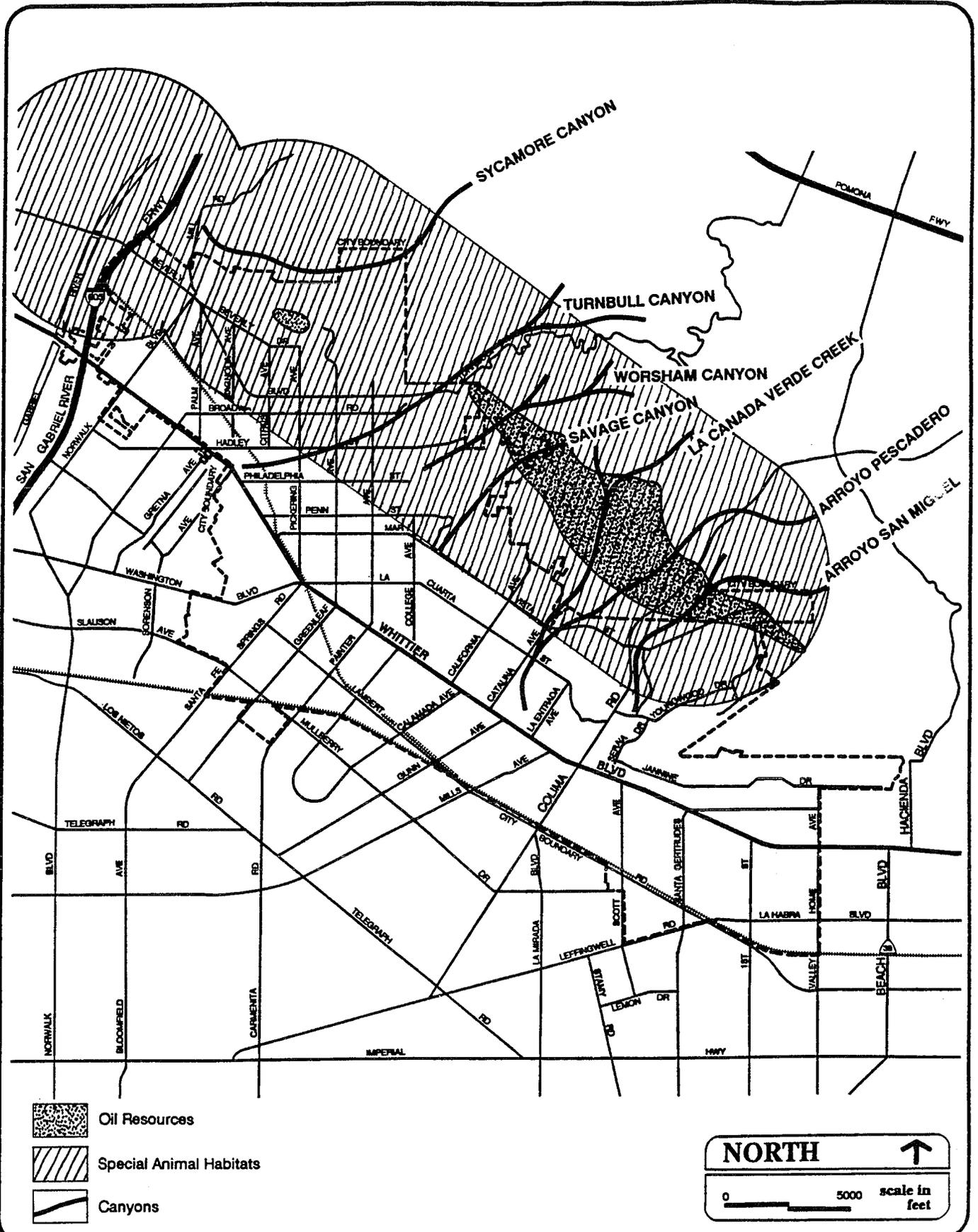
- The land is subject to development in the near future which will irreversibly destroy its open space value; or
- The area is recognized as having significance, in terms of containing unique ecological or cultural resources, by the scientific community.

The next level of priority should be accorded to those areas which:

- Are located adjacent to larger open space areas; or
- Land that, through its preservation, would complement the efforts of other agencies or individuals in preserving open space.

Exhibit 5-2 shows existing recreation opportunities in the area. Park development should be pursued to meet the recreational needs of the City. As population growth and new development occurs, the need for parks and recreational facilities increases. The City of Whittier sets standards for park development to ensure that adequate facilities are available and all interests are served. These standards include:

- The City will strive to provide at least 4.5 acres of parkland (improved park area for passive and/or active recreation use) per 1,000 residents.
- Provide adequate park facilities for new residential development.
- Provide a variety of recreation opportunities and park facilities including:



-  Oil Resources
-  Special Animal Habitats
-  Canyons

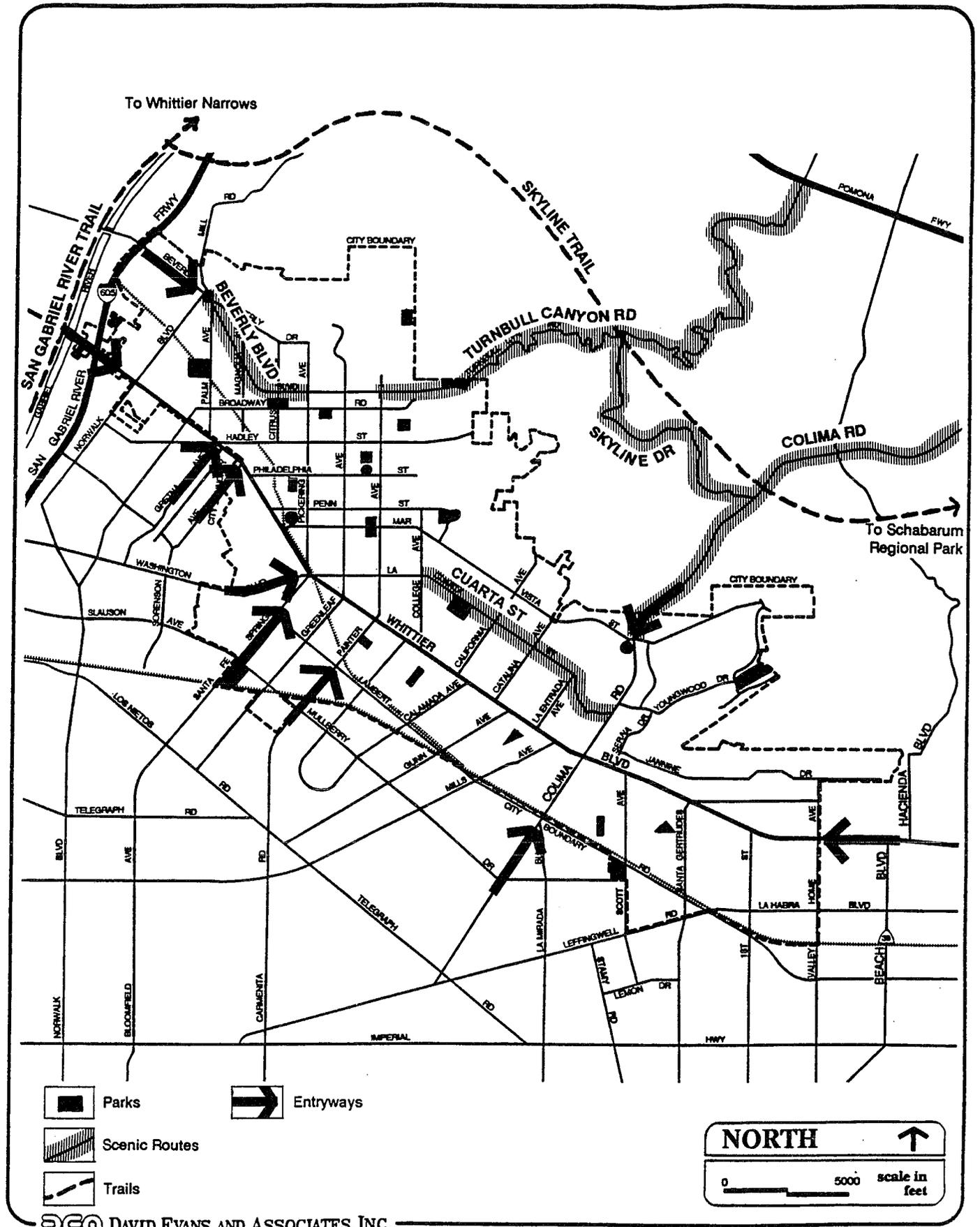
NORTH 

0  5000 scale in feet

DEA DAVID EVANS AND ASSOCIATES, INC.



EXHIBIT 5-1 CONSERVATION AREAS



DAVID EVANS AND ASSOCIATES, INC.

City of Whittier



GENERAL PLAN

**EXHIBIT 5-2
RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES**

Section 5: Environmental Resource Management Element (continued)

Mini Park - A mini park is approximately 1/4 to 1 acre in size with a 1/4 mile service radius. This category of park often utilizes available vacant land and is best located in high density housing and commercial areas. Mini-parks are considered only where the development of larger parks is not possible.

Neighborhood Park - Neighborhood parks are 1 to 7 acres in size with a 1/2 mile service radius. They may be smaller (1 to 4 acres) if located near schools. The service area of neighborhood parks is defined by arterial streets, railroads, and other physical barriers. Neighborhood parks often serve an established residential area and are used by bike-to or walk-to users.

Community Park - Community parks serve several neighborhoods and are 7 to 30 acres with a 1 mile service radius. They serve drive-to users and have facilities such as tennis courts, swimming pools, multi-purpose courts, community centers, senior citizen centers, and other varied facilities.

Specialty Park - A specialty park often has only one facility, such as a tennis court or baseball field, and would be used city-wide. Wilderness parks are included in this category and are often developed by counties for regional use. Wilderness parks should have a minimum area of 50 acres or more to accommodate users from the region and may have lakes and equestrian, hiking, and bicycle trails. They often have unique vegetation and topography and are not fully developed.

- Park facilities should have direct street access, available parking areas and utility connections.
- Provide retention and maintenance of existing park facilities.
- The City will promote shared use of school recreational facilities through joint use agreements.

Aside from parks and recreational facilities, bikeways and hiking trails connect major parks and activity centers. The City should pursue the development of a bicycle trail system throughout the City. Exhibit 5-3 shows the proposed bikeway plan. Designation routes should be developed as multi-use trails which will serve hikers, cyclists and/or equestrians. The trails connect parks, schools, commercial centers, regional trails, and parks and other facilities that would benefit from linkages. Aside from trails to various parks and activity centers, the trails should be developed along the scenic corridors of the area.

Specific steps to take in the provision of parks and in the development of a trail system in the City shall be the focus of the Park Needs Study that will be periodically updated. This Park Needs Study will be the primary program for implementing the Recreation Plan of Whittier.

SCENIC CORRIDOR PLAN

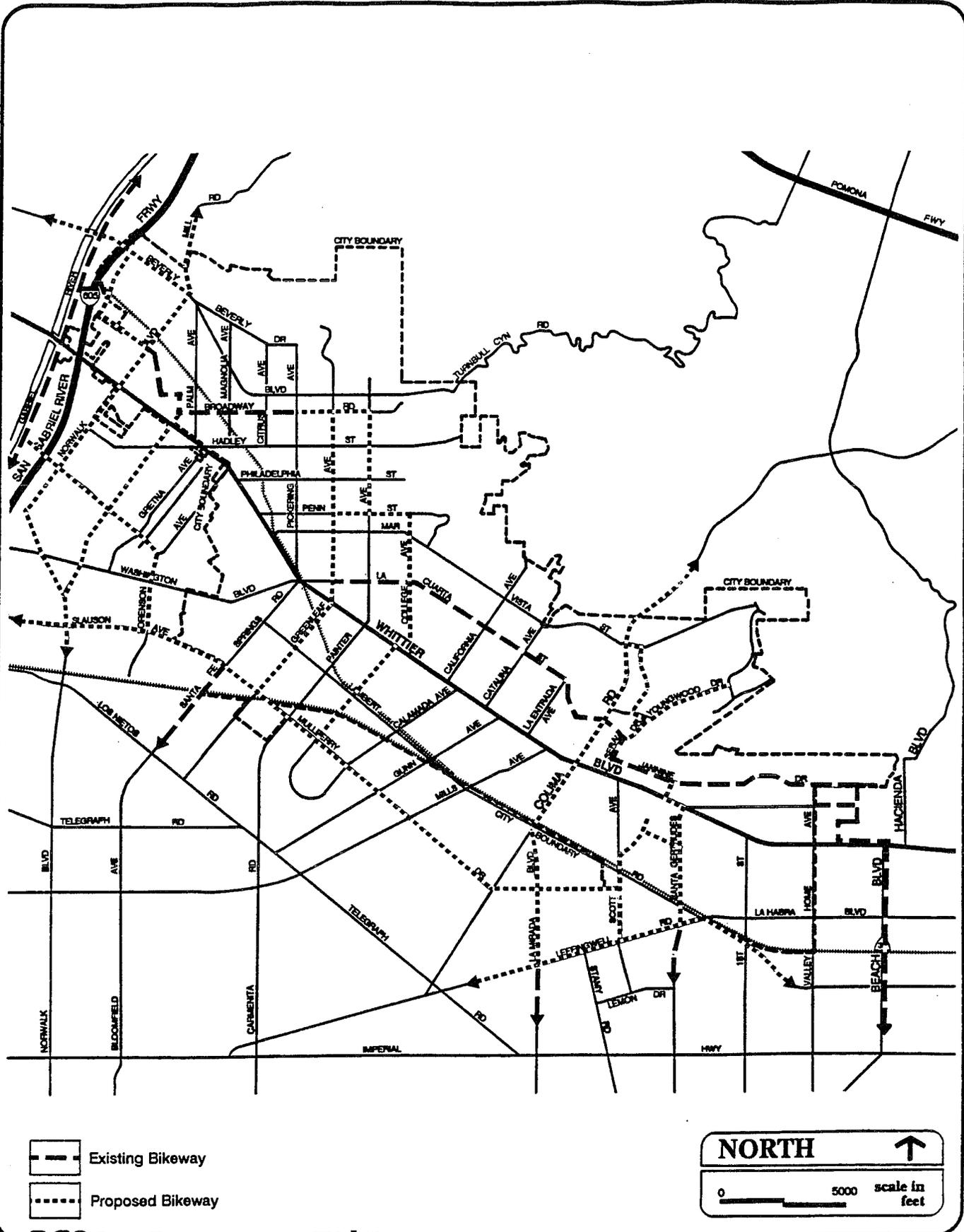
The scenic qualities of the City may be enhanced by the adoption of a program for positive identification of these resources. Scenic corridor development means the improvement of corridors to bring out their scenic qualities; control of structures, signs, and infrastructures along scenic corridors; and identification of the presence of aesthetic resources. The City of Whittier has scenic qualities in the form of tree-lined streets, roadways into the hills, views of the Puente Hills from the City, and aerial views of the City from the hills. The following standards apply to designated scenic and design corridors:

- Development of a landscaping plan for scenic corridors;
- Undergrounding of utility lines where appropriate;
- Limit and control of signs along corridors;
- Coordination of trail systems development along these corridors;
- Design standards for development along the corridors;
- Control of development which may detract from existing scenic qualities (block views and ridgelines); and
- Entryway treatments will be provided and maintained.

In order to preserve the qualities of scenic and design corridors, new development will be subject to the following standards:

- Design review for development along designated scenic and design corridors;
- Minimum grading or alteration of natural topography on parcels adjacent to the scenic corridors;
- Compatibility with existing character in terms of scale, height, design, building materials, and landscaping; and
- Promote landscaping, median treatments, etc., where appropriate.

Exhibit 5-4 indicates the designated scenic and design corridors and entryways in the City.



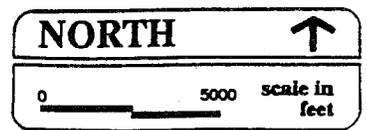
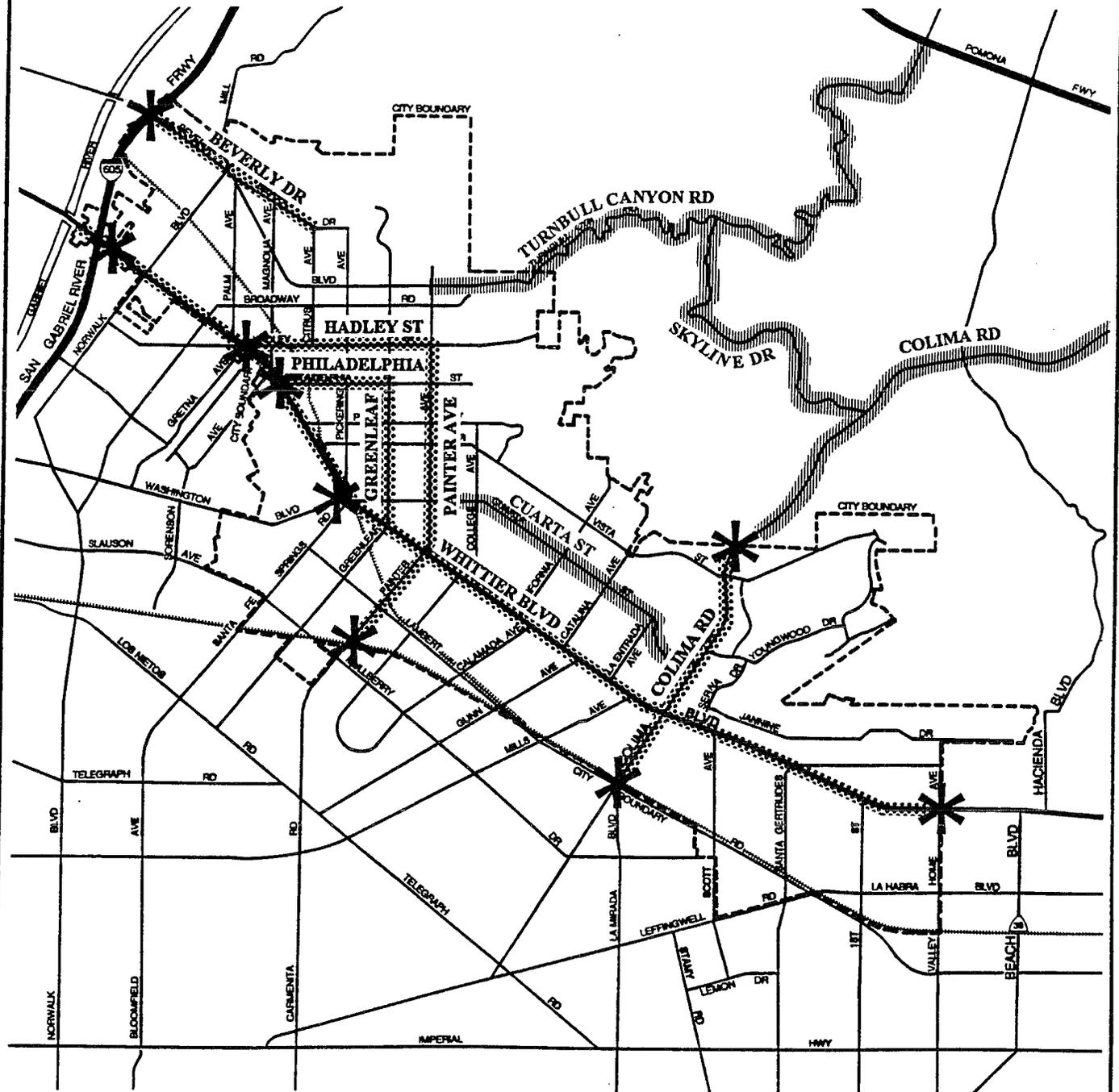
DAVID EVANS AND ASSOCIATES, INC.

City of Whittier



GENERAL PLAN

EXHIBIT 5-3
BIKEWAY PLAN



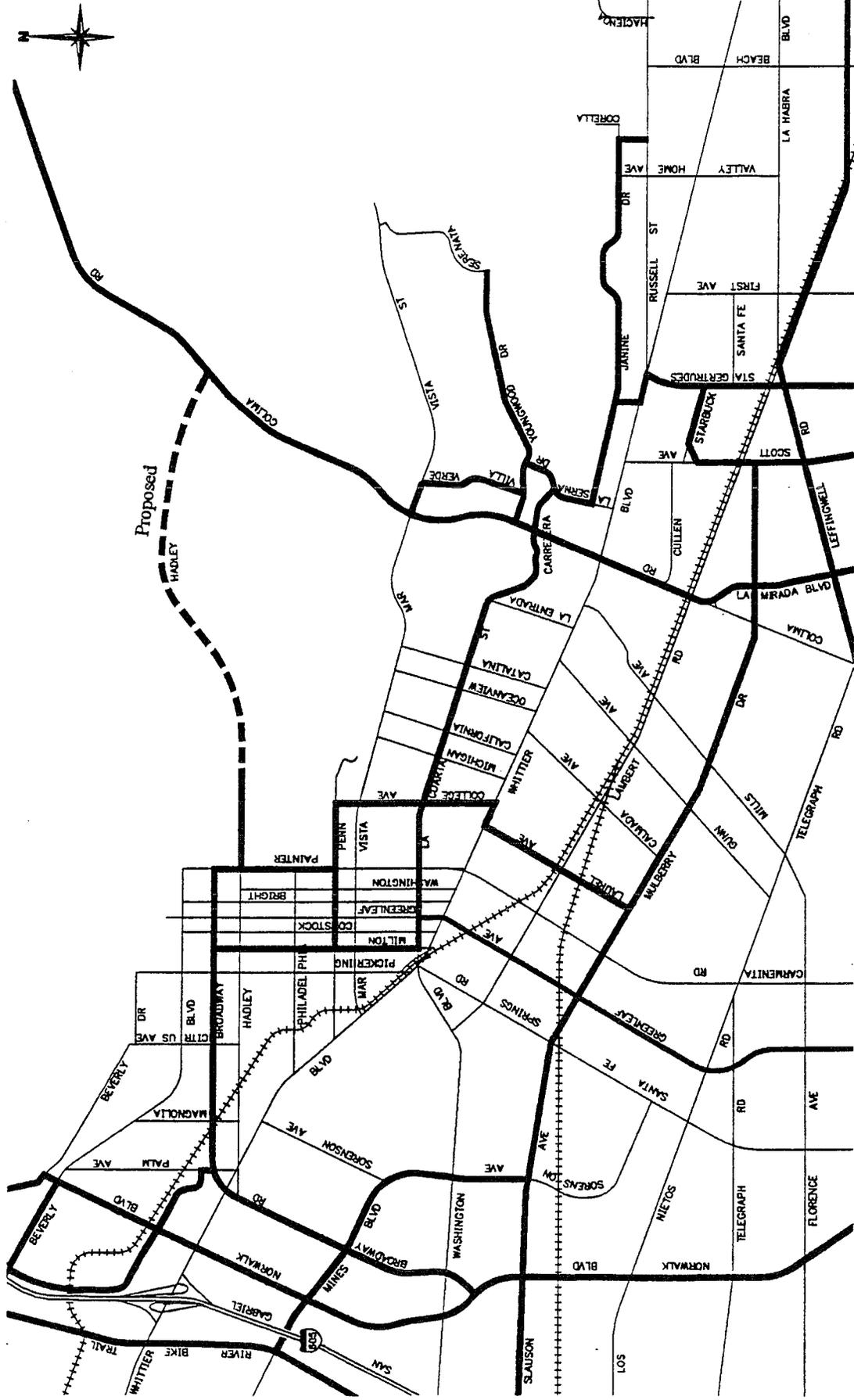
DEA DAVID EVANS AND ASSOCIATES, INC.

City of Whittier



GENERAL PLAN

EXHIBIT 5-4 DESIGN AND SCENIC CORRIDORS AND ENTRYWAYS



Proposed



— Bike Route

SOURCE: Austin-Foust Associates, Inc.

DCO DAVID EVANS AND ASSOCIATES, INC.

**EXHIBIT 4-5
BIKE ROUTES**

